

**Testimony of the Honorable Karen H. Gibson
Chair of the Capitol Police Board
Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate
before the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
and the Committee on House Administration**

July 26, 2023

Chair Klobuchar, Chair Steil, Ranking Member Fischer, Ranking Member Morelle, and members of the Committees, I appreciate the opportunity to testify today as Chair of the Capitol Police Board, together with my Board colleagues, as we discuss our efforts to safeguard the Capitol over the past two years, and our plans for the future.

I also appreciate the opportunity to highlight for the Committee on Rules and Administration the work of the Senate Sergeant at Arms team to provide security services for Senators and staff in D.C. and in state offices, and for Senators at special events, in transit, and at home.

I would be remiss if I did not also highlight the efforts, sacrifices, and devotion of the nearly 5,000 non-partisan officers and employees of the United States Capitol Police (USCP), the Architect of the Capitol, and the Offices of the House and Senate Sergeants at Arms. I know I join you in appreciating their dedicated service to the Congress and the United States.

The Capitol is secure, safe, open, and will remain so

When I came to this job in March 2021, the security environment was vastly different. Today, I am proud to report that the Capitol is secure, the Capitol is safe, and the Capitol is fully reopened to the public.

I'd like to reiterate something I said at the very beginning of my tenure. In April 2021, a reporter asked what worries me when it comes to securing the Capitol. I explained that "we could lock down the building.... We could keep the three-mile fence up with razor wire and National Guard. But that defeats the purpose of having the [Capitol] available and open to constituents.... And so, it [would] be a tricky balance to accomplish security while still providing the access that's needed for [constituents] to come marvel at the beauty and the history of this building."¹ Those words still hold true today.

¹ Karen H. Gibson, "New Senate Sergeant-At-Arms Wants to Keep Capitol Secure And Open To the Public," interview by Steve Inskeep, *Morning Edition*, NPR, April 15, 2021, audio, 07:02, <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/15/987552077/1st-priority-is-to-restore-confidence-in-job-senate-sergeant-at-arms-says>

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The safe reopening of the Capitol was one of my guiding principles when I took this role, and has been a focus of the Board throughout my entire tenure. This year, thanks to increases in USCP staffing and changes in security preparations since January 6th, we were able to reopen the campus to its pre-January 6th and pre-COVID levels.

Over the past two years, I have witnessed the growth and success of the Capitol Police Board and the United States Capitol Police. This non-partisan group of security professionals has committed to understanding the lessons of the past, to making improvements, and to looking forward.

We spent much of the past two years working with the Capitol Police and stakeholders to fully reopen the Capitol complex, while ensuring USCP is properly staffed to meet its challenging mission. We have reopened the Capitol Visitor Center on Saturdays, so that the American people are able to safely and easily visit their seat of government. On the Senate side, we have reopened all doors that were open prior to COVID.

Thanks to the efforts of the Board, the United States Capitol Police, and our dedicated staff, the Capitol is open, and it will remain so. I am very proud of that work. The Board is committed to keeping the Capitol fully reopened and to retaining the daily balance between security, openness, and free access to the campus.

Lessons Learned

I would like to acknowledge the many lessons we have learned, both from January 6th and from other events. I greatly appreciate the dedicated work and findings of the numerous reports from outside organizations, Congressional committees, and USCP's Inspector General. I take each of those reports and their recommendations very seriously, and we have used them as a guide as we continue to advance the work of the Board. While I will not repeat the details laid out in those reports, I will note areas on which the Board and USCP have focused.

Since 2021, I have seen significant improvements in USCP's ability to forecast, plan for, synchronize, coordinate, and execute responses to major events and security incidents. I have witnessed the development of a highly competent and well-integrated professional intelligence

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capacity that informs USCP's daily activities. The department has also vastly improved its communication, both internally and externally, and there have been corresponding enhancements in equipping, training, recruiting, and retaining personnel.

Those reports also contained criticisms of the Board, which we have used to improve our oversight practices, codify decision-making processes, and increase transparency and accountability. Indeed, these very hearings are a result of those recommendations, and I am pleased to be here as we collectively implement that change.

Significant Improvements

I came to this position following a 33-year career in the United States Army and the Intelligence Community. It has been a distinct honor and privilege to continue my service to the Nation by ensuring the protection of Members of Congress and the Capitol. I know everyone joining me at this hearing and all of our staff feel it is not just our job, but our civic duty to preserve and protect the Citadel of Democracy so that Congress can safely perform its Constitutional responsibilities to the American people.

I testified before the Senate Committee on Appropriations in April 2021, after only 30 days in this role. In that hearing, I discussed my top priority, which remains the same today: to work with my Capitol Police Board colleagues to develop a comprehensive plan to keep the Capitol and its occupants safe—guided by the desire to maintain a secure, open campus in a manner that guarantees both access and security.

There is more work ahead, but we have made significant progress as a Board. With the assistance of Congress and these committees, we completed a comprehensive security review of the campus, prioritized repairs and improvements to our security infrastructure, and worked to provide needed relief and support to the men and women of the United States Capitol Police who protect our entire community. I will continue to ensure that the protection of the Congressional community remains at the forefront of all we do.

I am proud of the work that we have accomplished so far, and would like to highlight some of our efforts and successes. What we have accomplished may not always be plainly visible. We will

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continue building on these efforts and successes over the coming years, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the Board, the Capitol Police, and our security professionals.

Safety and Security

The Capitol is secure, but we have more work to do, and always will. The Board and the United States Capitol Police must continually look forward in order to mitigate new threats, while not losing sight of the lessons we have learned in the past.

While I am unable to share technical specifics in this forum, I can note that, over the past two years, the Board has taken a number of strides for the physical security of the campus. Areas that were breached on January 6th have been strengthened and additional work is planned. We have created priorities to shape the remediation of those and other risks, and have applied them to the resources provided to the Capitol Police and the Architect of the Capitol.

Transformation of the United States Capitol Police

I assumed the Chair of the Capitol Police Board on my first day on the job. At that time, my primary focus was to ensure the Board identified and selected the correct person as the permanent Chief of Police.

This was our most critical and urgent task. We needed a transformative leader, one who understood policing and the national capital region, and who would take decisive action. The new Chief would need to lead a demoralized police department following a major event, which laid bare the significant weaknesses of its management and practices. Whomever we chose needed to be able to recognize the dedication, sacrifice, and needs of USCP officers and staff, and make major changes, while still earning the respect and confidence of the Congressional community.

We had to get this decision right. I was willing to continue looking for new candidates if the pool of applicants did not meet that high bar.

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The Board unanimously chose Chief J. Thomas Manger, and the Board chose well. He has made tough decisions and worked with us to effect needed changes, and retains the respect of his team and the Congressional community. He continues to have my strong support and confidence.

Board Governance and Practices

As Chair, I believe the Board should be responsive, transparent, and accountable. Over the past two years, we have significantly improved the way the Board operates, and our current day-to-day managerial practice reflects these goals.

As the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and others have reported, the Board previously operated in an ad-hoc manner. Certain Board members were not consistently consulted, decisions were not well documented, and stakeholders were not kept informed of Board activities.

All of that has changed.

As the committees are aware, the Board rewrote its manual of procedures in 2021, the first significant revision since the 2017 GAO report. In that rewrite, we incorporated best practices recommended by the GAO to improve our responsiveness to oversight, as well as validated and updated our decision-making processes for both routine events and in emergencies. I was gratified to see that these changes led the GAO to close its long-standing recommendation.

As we learned on January 6th, the former Board's responsiveness and decision-making processes were not well suited for a crisis. I am grateful to the Committee on Rules and Administration and the Congress for passing the *Capitol Police Emergency Assistance Act of 2021*. This critical legislation allows the Chief to request assistance from the Executive Branch during an emergency without requiring prior approval of the Board.

The Chief has already exercised this authority to proactively coordinate potential support for large events, and it has reduced the time required to generate that support. As the Board, we remain informed of the Chief's requests; however, thanks to this authority, he has been able to

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make the real-time operational decisions needed to protect the Congress. The Board works with USCP on feedback after the event, and we assist the department as needed.

Just as importantly, we have changed the way we deliberate, discuss, and make security decisions as a Board. Previously, security matters might be decided in forums separate from formal Board proceedings, or only between certain members of the Board. Decisions were not always well documented, and information and intelligence were not consistently shared between our organizations.

This is no longer the case. Since March 2021, when I assumed the Chair, every Board member has been involved in each deliberation and decision, and alternative opinions are freely exchanged. Board members do not always agree with one another, but we remain a non-partisan group of security professionals with diverse backgrounds, focused on a singular mission: protecting the Congress.

The informed security decisions that we make must be considered in an objective forum. The current configuration of the Capitol Police Board provides such an environment. I believe the voting membership of the Board, which dates to 1873, combined with the 2003 addition of the Chief of the Capitol Police as an *ex-officio* member, is the appropriate structure for advancing the security needs of the Legislative Branch in an agile, objective, non-partisan, and bicameral manner.

Many of our decisions are unanimous; however, when we don't agree on a life safety issue, each Board member explains their position from a security and professional standpoint, and the Board decides. Following any significantly diverging opinion, we work to resolve the cause of the disagreement for the future. We discuss how to handle similar situations, and learn from these events, creating guidelines and policies for subsequent decisions to reduce the likelihood of future issues.

This year's State of the Union provides a good example of such a process. The Board, as you are aware, was not unanimous on the use of the temporary fencing around the Capitol for the address. As I highlighted in testimony to the Senate Committee on Appropriations in April, following the State of the Union, the Board agreed to develop consistent guidelines for temporary fencing usage.

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Moving forward, we will have guidelines which will assist the Board in evaluating the balance between security and access, taking into account possible threats, the nature of the event, and Continuity of Congress considerations. This is how security should work.

I would also like to highlight the fact that we now have the ability to erect the temporary fencing within 24 hours. The Board will continue to investigate temporary fencing options that are more modular in design – and more in keeping with the beauty of the Capitol – that can also be installed and removed quickly in response to security needs.

We have also implemented new policies on information and intelligence sharing between our organizations. All of these changes will be reflected formally in our pending edit of the *Manual of Procedures*.

Transparency

The Board has made several improvements to increase transparency, and is committed to ensuring we properly balance security with transparency.

We have significantly increased engagement with Congressional Leadership and oversight. The twice-annual stakeholder forums have been of great use to the Board, affording us a chance to discuss sensitive security information, plans, and future activities. We are grateful to the leadership of your committees and other participants for the discussion, feedback, questions, and suggestions we have received in those forums. We find the interaction extremely useful.

We have also begun publicly releasing reports from USCP’s Inspector General. I acknowledge that the security review and release of these reports in concert with the Inspector General has taken longer than anticipated. Over the past year, the Board and its staff worked collaboratively with the Inspector General to develop a process for security review of those reports that he and his office identified for potential release. When Inspector General Russo started in January, we asked him to review the policies his predecessor had identified, the reports in queue for release, and the Board’s proposed process.

Once complete, the Board worked with USCP and the Inspector General to carefully review the first set of reports identified for potential release. Our goal is not to protect USCP from

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embarrassment, or to excise information that is critical to understanding the Inspector General's reports. Rather, we seek to safeguard that security information whose public release might jeopardize the safety or security of the Congressional community, including Members of Congress, staff, and the public, by providing harmful actors with sensitive information on security vulnerabilities, police tactics, technique and procedures, sensitive support relationships, or other security-related knowledge.

As our staffs and the Board review the reports, we discuss how we might best tailor redactions to ensure that the reports' conclusions and recommendations are clear, without jeopardizing sensitive security information. This review process takes significant time. The Board knows well that once information becomes public, there is no recalling it. We are committed to transparency, but never at the peril of our mission to protect the campus and people who work or visit here.

To date, the Board has formally released four Inspector General reports. In addition, two other reports are far along in the review process, and I look forward to their release soon. More are coming. Members of the public may review these reports on the USCP website at <https://www.uscp.gov/oig-reports>.

There will always be a tension between security and transparency, but the Board acknowledges its responsibility to ensure an appropriate balance between protection and public scrutiny.

Oversight of the United States Capitol Police

The Board has greatly improved its oversight and the way in which it executes oversight of the United States Capitol Police, while still ensuring that the Chief can lead the department. We do not seek to micromanage, but instead look to provide strategic guidance, direction, and support to ensure the success of Chief Manger's vision and the USCP overall.

To that end, we have increased the reporting requirements of the Chief and the police department, both at formal Board meetings and beyond. Previously, USCP might provide verbal briefings on upcoming events or topics, and few questions were asked. The Chief and his staff now routinely brief the Board on strategic plans, upcoming operations, significant initiatives,

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challenges, issues, and successes. We discuss numerous issues, ask questions, provide suggestions, and work with him to tailor changes and updates to help him be successful.

Where we, the IG, or others identify issues, we ask the Chief to provide information. We pride ourselves on being an ‘all voices’ Board, in which all three members are empowered to provide their opinions, and the Chief is able to provide his.

USCP Hiring and Staffing

Oversight is about more than fixing mistakes. During my time on the Board, I have been privileged to work with the Chief and the Congress to make changes to the United States Capitol Police that advance the security of the Congress and provide necessary improvements for the dedicated police officers and civilian staff who protect us every day.

The Board has worked closely with the Capitol Police and Congress to improve USCP’s ability to attract, hire, and retain professional law enforcement officers to protect the Capitol complex and its occupants. At its lowest point after January 6th, USCP had slightly more than 1,800 officers. As of July 24, 2023, that number stands at 2, 011 sworn officers and recruits. In calendar year 2023, USCP has already graduated 9 Recruit Officer Classes, with a total of 169 graduates. An additional 5 classes are in progress, with 91 potential graduates. I look forward to welcoming those new officers in the months to come.

The Board has assisted USCP by setting pay and retention policies aimed to attract both new and experienced law enforcement officers, established a lateral transfer program for experienced officers, and created a retired annuitant program for lighter work posts. The Board also authorized the use of Capitol Security Officers to augment USCP at select posts.

While these efforts have been successful, we still have more work to do. We are close to our pre-January 6th staffing numbers; however, the mission demand in certain areas of USCP has increased considerably. The Board will continue to work closely with the Chief and our stakeholders to ensure the United States Capitol Police is able to meet its expanding mission at the same time as it is able to provide its officers with the support and work-life balance they deserve.

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USCP Reorganization

The Capitol Police Board has worked with Chief Manger to support his vision for the future of the United States Capitol Police. His reorganization plan focuses on expanding the department’s intelligence, threat assessment, operational planning, and dignitary protection capabilities, while it continues to increase its staffing level. These changes will help USCP meet many of the remaining recommendations from the Inspector General’s flash reports and address ongoing operational challenges. We fully support the Chief’s work to transform the Capitol Police to ensure current and future missions address feedback from USCP officers and our Congressional stakeholders.

I am grateful to both committees for your support, feedback, and thoughtful leadership in evaluating the reorganization, and I look forward to seeing the successes of Chief Manger’s vision.

Improvements to Senate Security and Services to Senators

I would also like to provide the Committee on Rules and Administration with an update on Sergeant at Arms initiatives to better protect Senators and staff.

With the support of this committee, the Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate writ large, we have made significant enhancements to our ability to provide security support services here at the Capitol, at state offices, in residences, while in transit, and at special events. I am thankful for your support, feedback, and encouragement.

Member Security

The increasing number of threats to Members of Congress is of great concern. My office has made hundreds of referrals of concerning items to USCP over the past two years. With the support of the Senate, we have made changes and improvements to the services we offer to protect Members from the increasing threat landscape.

My Security Planning & Police Coordination team and Member Outreach and Security Coordination team provide complementary service for Members and D.C. offices. Security Planning & Police Coordination manages the new residential security program, coordinates

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security requests and briefings for D.C. offices and committees, and assists with vehicle and special access requests to the Capitol complex. Member Outreach and Security Coordination provides law enforcement coordination support for events throughout the country, as well as travel support for Members.

Residential Security

The newly implemented Senate Residential Security Program assists with the costs and coordination of certain security improvements. We have long worked with USCP to provide security assessments for Senators. This new program allows us to fund implementation of recommended protective measures. Since inception of the program this spring, we have had significant interest from Senators. I am heartened to see so many Senators engaging with my team on measures they might adopt to better protect themselves and their families at home, and I encourage others to reach out to the office of Security Planning & Police Coordination for additional information if they have not already done so.

Member Outreach and Security Coordination

The Member Outreach and Security Coordination team has significantly increased its support to Senators. Each week, we work with USCP and other partner law enforcement agencies to provide coordination, support, and services to Senators for events in D.C. or at home, and to coordinate security support for Senators in transit. In the last year alone, this team managed nearly 3,500 support requests, many of which were required on a short-notice basis. We have developed a new process flow for these requests, including a security portal and streamlined online request forms, eliminating the need for cumbersome emails or written correspondence.

Communication

Routine and Emergency Communication with Stakeholders

One of the most consistent pieces of feedback I initially received was that the Sergeant at Arms office did not communicate well with the Senate community. This may not seem significant, but

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poor communication in an emergency can have devastating consequences. We immediately revamped the way we communicate with the Senate community.

We consolidated what were previously scattershot administrative updates throughout the week into a weekly bulletin sent to Senate offices, committees, and support entities to provide a single reference document that covers door hours, permitted demonstrations for the upcoming week, training events, announcements on new services, software updates, and various support offerings.

We release *The Chamber*, a new publication for the Senate community, on a quarterly basis. *The Chamber* highlights Senate traditions, new SAA innovations, and information on SAA issues and services in a format that allows for greater depth and exploration of important topics. This summer's *Chamber* focused on innovations in our Printing, Graphics, and Direct Mail department, detailed information on ADA accessibility services, cybersecurity, security and accountability, state office services, training, the Employee Assistance Program, and announcements from across the Senate and region. I hope *The Chamber* will remain a valuable resource, providing useful, in-depth information on the many services the SAA offers Senators and staff.

We have also improved our emergency communication. In partnership with the Secretary of the Senate, we created a Senate Operations Center (SOC), which monitors events across the campus throughout the day and serves as the primary source for promulgating Senate-specific information during emergencies or security incidents. By consolidating Senate emergency and security information into the SOC, we streamlined and centralized emergency messaging to the Senate community, and are able to provide accurate and timely information to facilitate decisions. We continue to update our procedures and communication techniques, and I look forward to the committees' feedback on how we can further improve this critical service.

Accountability During Emergencies

We have made major strides in a critical, but often overlooked, part of responding to emergencies: the rapid accountability of personnel. By providing a proper accountability of Senate personnel, their location, and their status, we assist the United States Capitol Police in ensuring limited first responder capabilities are directed to the places they are most needed.

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In the past, our accountability system required one person from each office to account for the whereabouts and safety of everyone assigned to that office. The mobile website, while advanced for its time, could be challenging to use and required manual intervention. Offices would often email the SAA team with accountability updates, greatly limiting our ability to process and understand the data in real time. Additionally, this method did not provide accurate information on a staffer's current work status or location.

After two years of work, the SAA team fielded a modernized accountability tool this year, which allows individuals to rapidly report their individual status during an emergency. Each office can see the status of its employees within a mobile app, noting whether they have reported themselves safe, off the Hill, or have not yet responded. Office Emergency Coordinators can then focus solely on locating those individuals who have not responded or responding to those who have indicated a need for help. We can also collate data from across the Senate in real time and provide information directly to USCP if staff are identified as missing or needing assistance.

So far, we have only used the tool during drills or limited evacuations of an offsite building, but the response has been extremely positive. During a recent evacuation drill, more than 70% of Senate community responded, giving us an immediate snapshot of who was on campus and where they were located.

We have also rolled out our new Emergency Preparedness application, which allows staff to rapidly access and follow their office's specific emergency action plan. The app shows evacuation routes, internal relocation areas, and the designated shelter-in-place location for each individual office. Between the accountability tool and this new application, staff will have ready access to emergency information at their fingertips, without having to rely on recall in a crisis. A well-trained and informed workforce that knows how to respond in an emergency lessens the load on the USCP by decreasing confusion and allowing them to focus resources where they are most urgently needed.

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Security and Support for State Offices

My security responsibilities extend beyond the Capitol complex to more than 450 state offices across the country, where we support installation, maintenance, and monitoring of physical security measures; provide emergency supplies; conduct security preparedness planning and training; and facilitate rental payments and renovations. I have placed significant focus on improving support to Senate state offices to ensure the security and safety of staff and visitors.

For many constituents, visiting a state or district office may be their principal interaction with a Member of Congress. The rise in threats, and even actual attacks, at these offices has been a clear signal that we must enhance security support to state offices, not just at the Capitol.

A significant driver of our success has been re-engaging with state offices on the ground in their workspaces. In the past 12 months, my state office team has travelled to 68 offices, providing training, security assessments, inspections of vendor performance, and assistance with facility issues. In that time, more than 99% of state offices have adopted some level of SAA-recommended security measures, and I am heartened to see the significant engagement of staff in implementing measures to provide for their protection. In addition, we have executed nearly 50 contracts to improve security in state offices, and have conducted critical in-person training while visiting these offices.

Availability and Acquisition of Federal Space

Where possible, we highly encourage occupancy in federal office space rather than less secure commercial options. I am pleased to report that our federal footprint is increasing, though it still remains low. I recognize that availability of suitable office space is limited in some markets.

We are pushing the General Services Administration (GSA) to identify creative solutions in key markets with low federal office space vacancy rates, especially in light of a recent GAO study that indicates many federal agencies operate at a low level of capacity.² We believe this trend extends to many federal buildings across the United States, where buildings that are fully rented may not

² U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Federal Real Property: Preliminary Results Show Federal Buildings Remain Underutilized Due to Longstanding Challenges and Increased Telework*, GAO-23-106200 (Washington, DC, 2023), accessed July 23, 2023, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-106200>.

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be fully occupied. We are challenging GSA to identify ways to carve out small amounts of underutilized, suitable space in these federal buildings to meet office needs.

Security Services for State Offices

In response to increasing threats to Members of Congress and attacks at state and district offices, the SAA has worked with vendors, landlords, and federal partners to provide additional security services to state offices. We have deepened our relationship with the Federal Protective Service (FPS) to provide state offices with a number of services from FPS and their vendors.

I am grateful to the Senate Committee on Appropriations for including a provision in the FY24 bill that allows Senators to exempt the costs and square footage associated with security from the statutory limits on state offices. This important change will ensure that Senators and their staffs will no longer be forced to choose between their safety and security and the operating space needed to serve constituents.

State offices continue to encounter issues with the availability of funds for GSA and FPS to complete construction and resolve security deficiencies in federal buildings. We are working on recommendations to resolve existing issues that limit the availability and use of federal buildings for state offices.

We created a State Office Demo room that models security equipment and design best practices. This has been the most effective outreach tool in the history of the state office program. To date, staff from nearly every Senate office have received customized tours, most resulting in requests for additional security features.

Training

The most effective security countermeasure is a well-trained and engaged staff. Proper training is one of the most critical aspects of preparedness and security, and an area that can be easily overlooked at state offices. In the past calendar year, we trained over 500 staff from more than 70 offices.

We now provide training for state offices and state staff on security topics ranging from office emergency planning, dedicated security briefings provided by the Capitol Police and other federal agencies, STOP THE BLEED®, and more. We also offer courses from the Senate Office of Training &

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Development, the Employee Assistance Program, and the Senate Post Office specifically for state staff in areas from security to providing services to constituents. We partner with the Office of Congressional Accessibility Services and the Congressional Research Service to ensure that state staff have access to training opportunities similar to those provided in D.C.

STOP THE BLEED and AED/CPR training

We have seen significant interest in STOP THE BLEED training, which teaches staff how to provide medical assistance during an emergency until first responders can arrive. This is especially important in state offices, where trained USCP officers are not present. We have delivered approximately 180 STOP THE BLEED kits to state offices, and have trained more than 130 staff since 2022.

Building on the success of the state office program, we have begun offering this training in Washington, D.C. Given the great interest in this program, we are now certifying SAA employees as instructors. Having SAA trainers, rather than relying on outside contractors, will allow us to offer the course in a more routine fashion and provide on-demand training. So far, we have provided STOP THE BLEED kits to 23 D.C. offices.

In addition, we are finalizing details of a program to provide automated external defibrillator (AED) kits for state offices and dedicated training on CPR and the use of AEDs. We will begin a limited pilot in 10 offices.

Senate Cybersecurity

Finally, I wish to discuss one area of security that can often be overlooked, but is no less critical: cybersecurity. Our network, data, and services must remain secure to allow the Senate to conduct its legislative business. Just as threats against Members have increased, threat intelligence demonstrates renewed adversary interest in attacking U.S. Government networks to deny access to data and compromise our ability to function.

The SAA team defends Senate networks and infrastructure all day, every day, against a broad and persistent array of advanced cyber threats. We have successfully mitigated critical events, such as distributed denial of service attacks and ransomware attempts, to ensure the continuity and security of Senate communications.

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Improving our Cyber Threat Intelligence Partnerships

I am focused on furthering collaboration with Executive Branch partners in the Intelligence Community to improve timely and actionable access to pertinent cyber threat information. While communication of threats has improved over the last two years, our ability to receive timely threat information is often tied to personal relationships with staff at individual agencies. Too often, we rely on an Executive Branch partner to remember to push relevant threat reporting to our network defenders.

I appreciate the inclusion of a provision on cybersecurity intelligence sharing in last year's NDAA that requires the Executive Branch to work more closely with us. While we have made strides with some partners, I am disappointed that we have not seen the level of engagement called for in the legislation and hope that the required appointment and interaction will be forthcoming. In the meantime, I advocate for the cybersecurity needs of the Senate and Congress with Executive Branch partners at every opportunity.

Enhancing the Technical Resilience of the Senate

My Chief Information Officer (CIO) team oversees the engineering, implementation, and operations of the Senate's information technology continuity and disaster recovery programs, as well as emergency and secure communications. This includes the Senate's communications infrastructure, disaster recovery capabilities, and support for National Security Special Events.

We continue our work to enhance the Senate's data center posturing, security, and strategic communications capabilities to ensure redundant and secure means of communication. The CIO is also focused on critical emergency communication efforts designed to better protect the Senate's staff and resources, including the Joint Audible Warning System and Joint Emergency Mass Notification System, both joint projects under the auspices of the Capitol Police Board.

**Testimony of the Honorable Karen H. Gibson
Chair of the Capitol Police Board
Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate
before the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
and the Committee on House Administration**

July 26, 2023

Conclusion

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the work of the Capitol Police Board, United States Capitol Police, Architect of the Capitol, House Sergeant at Arms, and Senate Sergeant at Arms in ensuring the security of the Congress, the Capitol, and our millions of visitors.

I am proud of the progress the Capitol Police Board and the United States Capitol Police have made over the last two years. There is more work to do, certainly, and we must always keep moving forward. The motto of the Senate Sergeant at Arms office is “Honoring Tradition... Embracing Innovation” and that also applies to the Board and USCP. I take heart in our successes, acknowledge the need for continuous improvement and impeccable customer service, and constantly seek to enhance the security of the Capitol and the safety of Members, staff, and visitors.

It has been 28 months since I was sworn in as the 42nd Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper of the Senate, and became a member of the Capitol Police Board. Each day, I am humbled by the mission I have been entrusted with, and the dedicated public servants who help me execute that mission. I thank the brave men and women of the Capitol Police, whose job it is to keep us all safe, and the hard-working employees of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, the Architect of the Capitol, and the House Sergeant at Arms.

Thank you for your continued trust and support, and for the honor of continuing to serve my great country.